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6/24/98

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NSC BRIEFING

JULY 1968

INDOCHINA

1. Major military news: Southern France
reverse southern Laos.

A. Army attaches form French with-

drawals An Khe, Shifting as

"Operation Atlanta" to reverse

1. "Atlanta" leaves battlefield

clear enemy from ARVN coastal

strip. Started well, but

operation bogged down in

face enemy pressure.

2. French withdrawing from An Khe

to Pleiku 26 June when attacked,

lost over 1,000 men, entire

mobile group HQ, 2200 troops

3. Heavy pressure southern Laos

makes French influence over even

small sectors there problematical

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1. Aside from region adjacent
Cochinchina, Pleiku and
Ban Me Thout are now only
important French centers plus
several others.
2. Plateau areas important in
denying Viet Minh lateral
routes to Laos, Cambodia.
3. Also, Ban Me Thout long-term
dress of economic development
for valley.
4. Viet Minh build-up may be
designed establish base
this area for improved
bargaining position in possible
partition talks, also for
later penetration Laos,
Cambodia and Cochinchina.

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II. In Cambodia, only bright spot of past week. Cambodian army evidenced much improvement.

- A. Two battalions scored successes south of Phnom Penh.
- B. Cambodian units defeated one battalion near Kratie, sent it retreating northward.

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